(c) whether any efforts are being made to make special arrangement for the backward and rural areas of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) It has been the constant endeavor of the Government to expand the coverage of All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD) to uncovered and under-served areas, including backward and rural areas.

All AIR/DD terrestrial transmitters cover backward and rural areas within their respective coverage zones. During 10th Five Year Plan period, AIR have commissioned 38 transmitters and 13 transmitter projects are technically ready for commissioning, while DD have set up 145 transmitters so far. Apart from this, 134 radio transmitters and 29 TV transmitter projects in various parts of the country are presently under implementation.

In addition, multi-channel coverage with a bouquet of 33 TV and 12 radio channels has been provided through "DD Direct-Plus"—free-to-air DTH service of Doordarshan, launched in December, 2004 to provide coverage to hitherto uncovered and under-served areas. It is possible to receive DTH signals anywhere in the country (except Andaman & Nicobar Islands) with the help of a small sized dish receive unit.

Film on Lal Bahadur Shastri

730. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether material for a film on Late Lal Bahadur Shastri, former Prime Minister, is lying with his ministry;

(b) if so, the plans to use it for making a better film during this year of his birth centenary; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Films Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting produced two films, one in the year 1966 and the other in 1967, exclusively on Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, for theatrical release. Apart

from these, a 110 minute programme on the subject is being produced by Doordarshan during the current financial year, which will be in tele-serial and documentary formats.

TV Programmes for Agriculture

†731. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to discontinue the TV programmes related to agriculture; and

(b) the number of regional broadcasting centres which are telecasting the programmes relating to agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Prasar Bharati, a statutory autonomous corporation, has informed that there is no proposal to discontinue the TV programmes related to agriculture.

(b) Prasar Bharati have informed that all Doordarshan Kendras telecast programmes on agriculture of different durations and frequency. In addition, 18 Regional Kendras namely, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhopal, Delhi, Guwahati, Srinagar, Jaipur, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Lucknow, Patna, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jallandhar, Ranchi and Raipur are doing thematic agricultural programmes under the scheme "Mass media support to the agricultural extension" 5-days a week.

Prasar Bharati have also informed that area specific programmes are also being telecast in addition to the Regional Kendras in 36 clusters spread over 180 transmitters in the country telecasting agricultural programmes 5-days a week.

Decisions on media issues

732. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether government would take decisions on key media issues like allowing second phase of FM radio and foreign newspapers to publish from the country;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.